

instructions for transpalatal arch (TPA)



what does a TPA do?

The TPA maintains the shape of the upper arch during growth and development, also maintaining space for the adult teeth to erupt.

It can also be used as support if we need to bring impacted teeth into the arch-form.

speech

In the first few days your speech will be altered and you will produce extra saliva. This will get better with time and practice. Reading out loud for 5 to 10 minutes a day will help you get your speech back to normal again.

eating

Whilst getting used to your TPA, it is a good idea to cut all food into small bite-size pieces, as chewing can be difficult at first. Avoid eating chewy lollies and foods while you are wearing the TPA, such as chewing gum, toffees, red skins, etc.

cleaning your TPA

Your TPA should be cleaned every day with toothpaste and a soft toothbrush, morning and night. Ensure sufficient time is allowed to clean thoroughly around the appliance, gums and teeth - 3 minutes is recommended.

Disclosing tablets are to be used once a week for the first month, to identify problem areas with brushing. To use, brush your teeth for 3 minutes, chew on a tablet and spit out remains, look in the mirror and whatever is stained a deep pink colour is not clean, then you must go over and brush your teeth to remove all the staining. This will show you where you are missing each time you brush.

When at school, rinse your mouth out with water to remove any remaining food after you eat. You can use the water bottle provided.



discomfort

At first the TPA may irritate the insides of your cheeks and may cause ulcers, however soon your cheek tissues will toughen up and will start to feel normal again. The ulcers may take a while to heal, so we suggest warm salt-water mouth rinses and the use of wax on the metal part which is causing the irritation. Your local chemist can also provide you with an ulcer cream or gel.

wax

To use the wax, make the area where the ulcer is really dry, by using a tissue or cotton roll. Break half a pea size of wax off, roll into a ball and place on the metal part that is rubbing. The wax can stay there for a day, but should be changed daily. It will also stay while eating.

what we give you today

4 disclosing tablets - to aid in brushing, instructions found under "cleaning your TPA".

Toothbrushes - one for home and a travel toothbrush, which can be kept in your school bag or car ready for your appointments.

Toothpaste - to help you clean your teeth.

Wax - this gives your cheeks time to heal, and remember to dry the area first.

3 minute timer - this is to be used each time you brush your teeth, to ensure that you are brushing for the correct amount of time.

Water bottle - to fill with water, use after eating to help wash away any food that got caught while eating.